

ALLOWANCE

This Office Action is in response to Applicant's remarks presented in the telephonic interview between Examiner Teslovich and Attorney Susan Moon on December 9, 2010.

Examiner's Amendment

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Susan Moon on December 15, 2010.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claims 1-25 are cancelled.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 26-48 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The present invention is directed towards a method for securely processing frames in a fibre channel network. Independent claims 26, 36, and 48 each identify the uniquely distinct feature of:

- receiving a first frame at the first network entity from the second network entity in the fibre channel network, wherein the first frame is associated with a fabric login (FLOGI) or port login (PLOGI) message
- identifying a security enable parameter in the first frame, wherein the security enable parameter is used by the second network entity, when the second network entity is added to the fibre channel network, to determine if the first network entity has authentication capability or supports other security functions
- transmitting an acknowledgement to the second network entity that the first network entity has authentication capability or supports other security functions, the acknowledgement including algorithm information and a salt parameter
- receiving a second frame at the first network entity from the second network entity
- identifying a security control indicator in the second frame from the second network entity, wherein the security control indicator is used to determine if the second frame is encrypted or authenticated

- determining at the first network entity that a security association identifier associated with the second frame corresponds to an entry in a security database
- decrypting a first portion of the second frame by using algorithm information contained in the entry in the security database

The closest prior art, Bluemenau and Schneck disclose secure authentication of objects such as computers in a data network and an adaptive security system and method.

Nowhere do they disclose the use of a security enable parameter in a first frame to determine authentication capability accompanied by the transmission of acknowledgements regarding the authentication/security capabilities including both algorithm information and salt parameters followed by the use of security control indicators in subsequent frames, the indicators used to determine whether the frames are encrypted or authenticated in order that algorithm information may be gathered from a security database and used to decrypt the frame.

The prior art, either singularly or in combination fails to anticipate or render obvious the present invention.

Conclusion

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tamara Teslovich whose telephone number is (571)272-4241. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Emmanuel Moise can be reached on (571) 272-3865. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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